

April 30, 1975

after several meetings, much discussion of the issue at hand, tried to find a bill that could be acceptable by most, tried to find a way that it would be acceptable by most. Obviously, as you know, the proposed property tax levy was somewhat higher than when it was brought before the Committee. The Committee tried to follow the mandates of previous Legislatures when they suggested that there should be a Community College system and that system should be placed as a local system governed by the local elected boards for those areas. There are some in here that have opposed those, many for various reasons. Some that have had a tax supported Community College in their district paid for by the state while there were others that did not have the same. The Committee amendments, the bill in a simple way to explain it would be this. It provides that the local board is in charge. It provides that funds will come from two sources, actually three. The first source will be local property tax up to 2 mills for operation and up to 1 mill for 5 years for capital outlay. The sum of the two cannot exceed 2 1/2 mills and that's to provide leeway for those districts that have just been established that have no capital outlay right now and Metro is one of those. The other provision of the bill says that the state will provide state aid. We have put out a bill, 216, which I hope will follow soon that says that state aid level will be 11 million dollars. The other source of funds certainly would be tuition and federal funds, if any. The concept has long been accepted by the Legislature. This attempt by the Education Committee to make sure that it is constitutional, to see that the local area concept of Community Colleges is continuing as requested by the Legislature, as far back as four or five years ago. This simply cleans up and makes constitutional what this Legislature and previous legislatures have been on record for. The concern of property taxes in greater areas of concern than my own district. However, the alternatives are totally unacceptable to me and that is to have a state system with state direction, not concerned about the local needs or the local circumstances. As far as coordination is concerned, we are attempting to work on that with a 1202 study. LB 579 is on the Board. It certainly is not a panacea for the solution to the problem but it is certainly a step in the right direction to coordinate. The Advisory Board is a step in the right direction for coordination because it includes on that Advisory Board all segments of education. It includes those people that can say, hey, we need to coordinate because here is what the University is doing, here is what the state college is doing, here is what the private college is doing, here is what is happening in public elementary and secondary education. I think the bill is a reasonable approach to continuing a system that's previously been established and previously has established credibility for working. I know the concerns that all of you have and I certainly have the same ones. That we need to coordinate higher education and I agree with that. We have tried with a step in the right direction with 579 that I hope you will give a favorable vote to but the question at hand is here. If you want Community Colleges, if you want the area Boards